

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION NODS-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7377

S E C R E T ISLAMABAD 8998

NODIS CHEROKEE

EYES ONLY FOR THE SECRETARY FROM BYROADE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MASS, PK, US
SUBJECT: NUCLEAR REPROCESSING PLANT

1. I SAW BHUTTO AT THIS HOME TONIGHT IN CONNECTION WITH THE QUESTION OF TIMING YOU ASKED ME TO PUT TO HIM AS REGARDS THE FRENCH REPROCESSING PLANT. I HAD BROADENED THE QUESTION SOMEWHAT, HOPING TO GET SOME CLUE AS TO WHEN THERE MIGHT BE SOME TANGIBLE EVIDENCE OF TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY, WHICH IT SEEMS TO US HERE WOULD PROBABLY CALL FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF OUR NEW LEGISLATION. THE LATTER POINT I TOOK UPON MYSELF, MAKING SURE IN A LIGHT MANNER THAT AS A LAWYER HE UNDERSTOOD THAT I WOULD NOT PRESS HIM FOR EVIDENCE THAT COULD BE USED AGAINST HIM.
2. BHUTTO TOOK THE QUESTIONS WELL, SAYING HE WOULD OF COURSE NOT WANT YOU TO RECEIVE ANY SURPRISES FROM THEM IN THE PERIOD AHEAD. HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT HE PERSONALLY WAS NOT SURE ENOUGH OF THE FACTS TO GIVE ME OFF HAND AN ANSWER WHICH HE COULD BE POSITIVE WAS RELIABLE.
3. BHUTTO TELEPHONED THE ACTING FOREIGN SECRETARY IN MY PRESENCE AND ASKED HIM IF ANY FRENCH CITIZENS HAD ARRIVED, OR WERE ABOUT TO ARRIVE, IN CONNECTION WITH THE REPROCESSING PLANT. THE ANSWER HE RECEIVED WAS THAT THERE WERE NONE AND NONE WERE EXPECTED IN THE NEAR FUTURE. BHUTTO ASKED HIM
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TO GIVE HIM A MORE COMPLETE REPORT WHEN HE GOT THE FACTS.

4. BHUTTO THEN ASKED TO BE CONNECTED WITH MUNIR KHAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE PAKISTAN ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION, WHICH TOOK SOME TIME AND ALLOWED US TO TALK OF OTHER THINGS WHILE HE WAS CHASED DOWN IN LAHORE. BHUTTO ASKED HIM WHEN SOMETHING OF A TANGIBLE AND PHYSICAL NATURE WOULD BEGIN TO HAPPEN RE THE REPROCESSING PLANT. STILL ON THE PHONE, BHUTTO TOLD ME HIS REPLY HAD BEEN THAT THEY MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET A FIRST CIVIL WORKS STARTED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR. I TOLD BHUTTO I DOUBTED THAT CIVIL WORKS SUCH AS BUILDINGS WERE IMPORTANT, UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY GREAT PUBLICITY RE LAYING CORNER STONES, ETC. BHUTTO SAID THERE WOULD BE NO SUCH NONSENSE ON THEIR PART. I SUGGESTED THAT HE ASK MUNIR KHAN WHEN SOME EQUIPMENT MIGHT ARRIVE AND HE UNHESITATINGLY PUT THE QUESTION TO MUNIR. THE REPLY HE RECEIVED WAS THAT THE VERY FIRST ITEMS COULD NOT ARRIVE BEFORE ABOUT THE MIDDLE OF NEXT YEAR. I TOLD BHUTTO THAT THE FRANKNESS WITH WHICH HE REPLIED TO MY QUESTION WAS INDEED APPRECIATED. HE HUNG UP, AND I ALSO TOLD HIM I WAS PERSONALLY RELIEVED AT THE INFORMATION HE HAD GIVEN ME.

BYROADE

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